15: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1926 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

484 562 624 future expeditions of the same party she will be chief. In the village she has the right to judge cases that are strictly between women.

431 425 484 626 [535 513] A man may refuse to give an ox, making the excuse that he has nothing to give. Then the women will mutter, saying, "He kills us by making us stand in the hot sun." They seem to think he is cheating them. The man's wife may intercede on their behalf. She will put on her husband's cloth, put a rek about her neck, anoints her body with oil, and then takes the chief's spear, and dances among the women. For such a display the chief will usually relent, and tell his young men to bring out the ox. He may be very churlish, and refuse to give them what they desire. They depart, muttering curses on him and his family. If in a short time sickness should occur in his family it is attributed to the ill-will of these women. He sends a messenger to call them. They come and get the ox. He then tells them of the sickness in his family, and the women order ashes to be brought. The women fill their hands with the ashes. They then pray after this manner, "You are God. We were refused an ox by this chief. He now has sickness. We are no longer angry at him. Permit him to escape." Next they spit on the ashes they hold in their hands, and then sprinkle them all over the members of his household. The women then depart, and the patient recovers.

[753 755]

431 425 [788] When the women go to a chief and he gives them an ox, they sprinkle ashes about his house as a blessing. The ox is taken to their village, and it may be killed immediately, though it is more likely to be kept for a time. When the animal is killed the brisket is given to the old men of the village. The old women take the rump, and the younger women divide the remainder of the meat.

425 556 431 [533] A man is glad to have the women come to beg from him, even when he refuses to give them what they desire. It is a great compliment to have the women come, as it shows that his fame has spread abroad as a rich and generous man. Then, too, the ceremony is such as to feed the vanity of the man singled out for the honour. The women usually rush up to the house shouting and singing his praises. They sing songs about his bravery, and tell of his virtues, but the chorus of their song usually is: "Brother, lead out that ox."

425 431 After a chief has given an ox, the women go away saying that he is a fine man, and a great chief. The women seem to demand a great deal. Once, in a case observed, the ox was given. The women did not watch

15: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1926 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

735 241 fills the gourds belonging to the women. If the basket is not sufficient to fill all the gourds, and if the man is of a good disposition, he brings out enough more grain to fill them all. If the man is churlish he will say, "I have given you enough" and will refuse to give them any more than the one basket full. Sometimes a man will say, "Why do you make sport of me by coming here to beg? See, my grain is very little indeed." That is the line the man takes when he refuses altogether to give grain to the women.

788 735 241 If the women are pleased with the amount of grain that has been given them, they will bless the owner of the threshing floor. Each woman takes a few grains of the grain that has been given her, and sprinkles it on the threshing floor. As she sprinkles the grain she says, "I return you yours, I eat, and am satisfied." After such a blessing his crop the next year should be very abundant. Often the recipient will say, "I am a woman belonging to God. I am happy, because you have given to me, now I bless you."

425 556 It is an honour to have the women come to a man's floor to beg, as it implies that he is a rich man, and can supply them. However, it is often a hardship, and many of them can ill afford the grain they give away to the women. One man said that one year all the grain he raised was given to the women who begged from him, and the only way he got food for his family was by his wife's going out to other threshing floors, and begging from the owners of the floors. It is not unusual for a woman to go to a village at some distance and beg from all the men in the village. She may return with ten or more baskets of grain. Sometimes she is refused the grain that she seeks. The man who refuses to give from his [626] threshing floor is considered a very mean man, and to make a good showing, they give more than they can afford.

Men sometimes go to the threshing floors to beg, but in that case the procedure is different. The man who begs gets a basket and, unbidden, helps carry the grain to the village. At the end of the threshing the owner is supposed to give him a basket of grain, but often he is given less than that. Both sides profit. The beggars have a picnic, and the man from whom they beg is highly honoured.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944)1946
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

touch the ground, but always rested on the foot of the bearer when he stopped[15]. These three men took their place at the head of the "bull procession", and started for Fashoda.

We were told that as soon as they reached Khor Arepejur in front of Fashoda they would send messengers back to our village of Adodo and others ahead to the village of Debalo, where the king-to-be-inducted was residing. Then when the messengers arrived at the respective villages the two processions would start simultaneously from the villages about equal distance from Fashoda to meet at Khor Arepejur for the final ceremony.

After the Golbany and the old men left, preparations were made for a sacrifice inside the enclosure in front of the houses where reside Nyikang and Dak. I noticed that no one passed these houses without bowing low and saying *Kwa dibong*, which in modern parlance would be "Your Honour". A small ram was brought, and then was killed by having its throat cut. This ceremony was attended by only a few of the people gathered in the village, and the others did not seem to pay much attention to it. A few minutes later, however, a female goat was brought and tied to the enclosure, on the outside, and all the men in the village gathered and sat on the ground in an attitude of utmost respect, every man with his feet under him and the backs of his hands touching the ground in front of him. Most of the people in the village were the custodians of Nyikang and Dak and had been accompanying them on the eight-day march from the village of Akurwa, which is the traditional home of these gods. None of these men carried spears, but all were armed with whips of Nyikang, which is rather a testimony that these gods do not need clubs and spears to protect them, but men armed as women are sufficient to overcome all opposition. There were about sixty men in the group from the village of Akurwa led by their chief. As the young female goat baa-ed, one of the old men in the group addressed it thus, "why do you cry, are you not

15. This was the practice with all sacred spears, and the images of Dak and Cal as well. Nyikang of course was never put on the ground.

22: Howell E-5 (1951) 1952 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

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PLATE 18. Meanwhile an ox had been tethered near the drums, and a warrior stood by, spear in hand, ready for the sacrifice.

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PLATE 19. After several minutes of dancing, the crowd moved forward and knelt before the tomb.

(P 1648)

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

ment so much as endurance that is called for at a Shilluk dance. 535 881

The festivities are opened by a salute of the warriors to the assembled chiefs. The leader of the band approaches carrying a bowl of dust and asks the senior chief present or the leading guest to bless the dance; he takes a little dust [788] from the bowl and sprinkles it on the ground while calling down a blessing on the gathering. Then the warriors who are congregated at the opposite end of the field thunder forward with whoops and cries, their spears uplifted to strike, the lust of killing in their eyes; they stop dead in their tracks when the spears of the front rank are but a foot away from the row of chiefs and guests, and a roar of laughter goes up if they succeed in making anyone flinch. A second wave follows the first and so on, until with the onslaught of the last group this phase of the dance ends. The beat of the drums now quickens its tempo, spears are discarded in favour of dancing sticks and ambach shields, and the girls come forward to claim partners. A girl may take part in the [562] dance almost at any age, so that little girls of not more than twelve years of age are found taking their places in the long lines being formed. The dancers arrange themselves two abreast, the boys facing the girls; the boys stand with arms bent and sticks held upright, the girls hold themselves rigid with their arms pressed close to their sides. As three hundred pairs of feet thud down in unison, the ground seems to shake and dust rises in clouds; the drums throb, feet thump, the metal shells clash and bells clang, male voices yell hoarsely and female trill—the din is indescribable. The long lines circle slowly round the dancing floor, the boys jumping forward and the girls backward; in a concerted movement the girls raise their arms as if to ward off a blow and make a turn, first to the left, then to the right, while their male partners make the same half turns, bringing their sticks and shields over the girls' heads to protect them, as it were, from the threatened attack. This movement which is done at every dozen or so steps is the only variation in the monotonous jumping of the dance. A rest is called when the drummers